

MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2015
6:30 P.M.

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, August 11, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Bobby L. Davis presided. Council members Michael Baker, Ronald Atkinson, Ralph Atkinson, Odessa Gregg, Joseph Frazier and Emerson Hunt were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Pam Jones and City Attorney Catoe.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order and Councilwoman Gregg gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Davis welcomed citizens, guests and the press. (Hometown TV).

Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on July 15, 2015 and the special meeting on July 28, 2015, seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

Lt. Bessie Gause of the Marion Police Department was named *July Employee of the Month* and presented with a gift certificate. Mayor Davis thanked Lt. Gause for her untiring efforts to keep Marion safe.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis presented the Mayor's Monthly Beautification Award to the Marion Baptist City Changers. They recently painted Grice's Recreation Center which tremendously improved the look of a City building that is enjoyed by many in the community. Mr. Tommy Nolan accepted this award on behalf of the City Changers and thanked the Mayor for this recognition. He commented that the volunteers enjoyed doing this project for the City.

On behalf of the Mayor and City Council, City Clerk Pam Jones read a Letter of Appreciation to the Marion Baptist City Changers, recognizing them for their outstanding contributions in helping the community with needed repairs and also for their generosity in painting Grice's Recreation Center as their project for June 2015. Mayor Davis presented the MBC City Changers with a "Historic Marion" back pack containing a t-shirt, keychain and ink pen. Mr. Nolan thanked the City employees, in particular Mr. Ammons, for their help in enabling them to take on needed projects in the City. They

don't want recognition, but to be good stewards of the community. Mayor Davis responded that they were all that and more and wanted to let them know how much they are appreciated.

Mayor Davis commented that the 2015 Summer Camp was a success, with as many as 160 children per day attending. The camp provided two meals per day, along with numerous programs and activities for a fun-filled and educational summer. The campers were able to attend Wild Water & Wheels again this year and they had an outstanding time. Mayor Davis then recognized the hard working volunteers who tirelessly spent their days working with the children: Mrs. Betty Bryant – Camp Director, Mrs. Geneva Davis – Co-Director, Ms. Laurie Smith – Co-Director and Ms. Syrenthia Owens – Volunteer, presenting them with a plaque and monetary gift.

Mayor Davis recognized the Summer Camp Excellence Award Winners for outstanding accomplishments in English and Math. The campers received a Certificate of Excellence, which were presented by Camp Co-Director Laurie Smith.

On behalf of the Mayor and City Council, City Clerk Pam Jones read a Proclamation recognizing Marion's Dixie Belles, who won the 2015 Dixie Belle 15-U State Softball Champions, and went on to represent the state of South Carolina at the Dixie Belles Word Series Championship in West Monroe, Louisiana. The City of Marion and the State of South Carolina were well represented by this outstanding group. The coaches were each presented with a copy of the Proclamation and, along with the team, were presented with a blue ribbon medal for their state championship. The players each offered a comment and the coaches thanked the City and everyone who supported them in their endeavors. Mayor Davis stated that there would be a block party for all three 2015 State Championship teams held on August 12th at 6:00 at the Shannon Wilkerson Gym/C. D. Joyner Parking lot and everyone is invited to attend this celebration.

Mr. Al Blake and Mrs. Patricia Atkinson were present to speak on behalf of *the Historic Marion Preservation Group*. This group has a vision for helping improve our City that will encourage more businesses and events to come to Marion. It also will encourage more families to move in and visitors to come stay awhile. There is a deep and passionate love for the City of Marion, its history and its resilient people, and want to share that with others. There are numerous people statewide who are willing to help us pursue our goals. The group is asking for Council's support, not with money, but by championing

this belief that Marion can marketed in a way that would put us on the map. Mayor Davis thinks this a wonderful idea and that he and Mr. Ammons are on board and thinks Council will also be on board. Councilwoman Gregg commented that she is on board. Councilman Hunt wishes people would take the time to realize how beautiful Marion is and appreciates those who want to fight for the history and for the City. Councilman Atkinson thanked them for coming and for their input. Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson appreciated their effort and will help in any way he can. Councilman Frazier commented that he would help in any way he could and that Marion has a lot to offer. Councilman Baker is already making a draft for the group. Mayor Davis commented that this can be accomplished if we all work together and to call if help is needed.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Regarding the DHEC Permit for the compost site, Mr. Ammons commented that in 2014 some regulations had changed for the compost site and he has contacted DHEC and is changing our permit application from just a registration to a permanent permit. MR. Ammons will keep Council apprised.

The District 2 Crime Watch signs are being put up (Main Street, Jones Avenue to Oliver Street) and there will be approximately 25 in that area.

Mr. Ammons stated that the 911 address updates that were just sent to Council should be all of the changes being made. Mayor Pro-tem Atkinson expressed some concern over changing the addresses of houses that had the same address for 40 years and no new houses in that area. Mr. Ammons responded that a new software program used by E-911 established the new house numbers, based on distance and amount of footage on a street and whether a possible structure could be added (which would keep the address numbers in order). For any concerns or questions, call Mr. Graham at Marion County as the City has no authority to change the numbers as this is done for/by E-911. Mr. Ammons commented that once these changes were complete those numbers should never have to change again.

CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE

Attorney Catoe had nothing to update at this time.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Departmental reports are sent to Council in their packets. Ms. Dolly Boyer of the District 4 Neighborhood Watch thanked everyone who participated in the National Night Out and the MPD for

their assistance. Mayor Davis thanked Ms. Boyer for helping get another Neighborhood Watch started along Liberty Street and hopes that all areas of Marion will get on board with this program in order to help cut down the crime rate. Chief Dewayne Tennie invited everyone to attend to MPD's Open House on August 25 from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m. There will be a meet and greet with the officers and a cookout for those attending. Mr. Al Blake, HMRA Executive Director, invited everyone to the Music on the Square Event on August 21st from 6:00 – 9:30 p.m. Three local vendors will have food available and a live band (Jukebox Elly) will perform. Mrs. Rosanne Black, Museum Director, commented that she was excited to be on board with the new Marion Historic Preservation Group and was expecting great things from the group. County Councilman John Q. Atkinson commented that this was his first City Council meeting and how impressed he was and that a lot of ground was covered. Ms. Mary Dunbar, Marion County Healthcare Executive Director commented that she appreciated the warm welcome she has received since moving to Marion and sees many great things soon happening here.

DISTRICT AND CITY UPDATE FROM COUNCIL AND MAYORS

Councilman Michael Baker commented that he would get with Mr. Ammons during the week.

Councilman Joseph Frazier commented that there was a car lot at the corner of Liberty and Dunlop and the grass is too high. Mr. Ammons will check into this. There is overgrown property at the corner of Liberty and Bluff and MR. Ammons responded that he would check on that but believes there may be a change in ownership as someone is looking to develop that property for housing. Councilman Frazier commented there is a house by him that is overgrown with vegetation and just sitting there and Mr. Ammons will check into that and send a letter to the owner.

Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson thanked the MBC City Changers for what they've done for the City and also congratulated the Marion Dixie Belles on their success. He thanked Al & Patricia of the Historic Preservation Group for their great ideas and that we will be glad to do what we can to help. He inquired as to what is going on at the old Coastal Lumber Company as he has seen dump trucks and backhoes at that location. Mr. Ammons responded that they may possibly be doing an environmental study as at time that property was contaminated.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson had no comment at this time.

Councilwoman Odessa Gregg commented that she attended a program at the School District office and it was entitled "I Am the Change" and she thinks the citizens of Marion can say "We Are the Change". She further commented that she met Debbie Sledge and her son earlier this week and that

she says that “We Are Family”. These two things kept coming to mind, and with change and the fact that we are family, we can work together and can accomplish anything we set out to do here in Marion. Councilwoman Gregg commented that she would be the ‘consultant for the street committee’, which are those who give her information, which she says is reliable 99 times out of 100 and will continue to bring good news.

Councilman Emerson Hunt had no comment at this time.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis thanked Rev. Larry Williams for once again coming to Marion to distribute food to over 700 of our citizens. He thanked everyone for the successful National Night Out. Mayor Davis thanked NBA Star Raymond Felton, Jr. for speaking at the opening ceremony of the Debs and Angels softball tournament. We’ve had quite a few important people come to Marion lately and it’s our responsibility to pick up the ball and run with it. Continue to pray for each other and continue to cut down crime. Mayor Davis was approached a young man who started a *buy-back guns program* in North Carolina and is interested in doing that here (at no cost to us). Mayor Davis, Mr. Ammons and Chief Tennie will meet with him to discuss this program.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ronald Atkinson; motion adjourned.

Mayor Bobby L. Davis

City Clerk Pam Jones

Taped: August 11, 2015